WRITING MEASURABLE GOALS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS: THE NEW & IMPROVED VERSION

September 2013

MARSE RULE OCT. 18, 2011

R340.1721e Individual Educational Program

(a) A statement of measurable annual goals, including measurable short-term objectives.

The Office of Special Education has identified that benchmarks can be written in place of short-term objectives.

“MEASURABLE”

The target is written so there is evidence that the desired level of performance has been met.
MEASURABLE GOALS……
DATA
( THE NEW FOUR-LETTER WORD)

- Must include concrete methods and
criteria for assessing progress and
achievement of outcomes.
- Allow for a calculation of how much
progress is achieved.

FOUNDATION OF THE GOAL

- The foundation on which the IEP is developed is the Present
Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
(PLAAFP).
- The PLAAFP should:
  - Begin by identifying the current functioning based on
data.
  - Describe student need based on data.
  - State the adverse educational impact of the student’s
current functioning.
  - Address post secondary goals for students of transition
age.
- A well written PLAAFP will identify baseline data upon which
to write measurable goals related to the student’s needs and
offer a starting point upon which to build instruction.

RECOGNIZING A “SMART” GOAL

- S = Specific
- M = Measurable
- A = Attainable
- R = Relevant
- T = Time-bound
A WELL WRITTEN GOAL CONTAINS...

• The ending date for achieving the goal.
• What behavior the student will demonstrate.
• What level, degree, or condition the student will perform.
• How mastery will be evaluated.
• The potential for being attained in one year.

Model:
By _____________, (the student) will ______________________
(date) (skill/behavior)
when/at/during _______________ for/within/on _______________
(condition) (criteria)
based upon___________________.
(assessment/evaluation)

ACTIVITY

 Each table has a half-sheet of paper with one of the following labels on it:
  ▪ Behavior/Skill
  ▪ Criteria
  ▪ Condition
  ▪ Assessment/Evaluation

 Based on your table’s label, as a group, brainstorm a list of examples that could be included in a measurable goal statement.

SKILL/BEHAVIOR EXAMPLES

 Verbally Express
 Follow Directions
 Identify
 Request
 Locate and Use
 Comply
 Transition
 Demonstrate (skill)
 Manage (behavior)
 Remain (on-task, in area, on seat)
 Interact
 Engage
 Maintain
CONDITION
EXAMPLES:
- When given a request
- During transition periods
- During social conversation
- When provided a prompt
- During class discussion
- When working independently
- When given a choice
- When provided a visual schedule
- Prompts or cues: on teacher’s oral request...
- Structure: during small group work, independent work
- Location: in hallways during passing time...
- Content specific: in math class...

CRITERIA
EXAMPLES:
- Trial based: on 9 out of 10 trials
- Production: within 3 adult prompts
- Percentage: during 75% of observational occurrences
- Change from baseline: improve by at least 10%
- Behavior change: no more than 3 times a day
- Across sessions: on 9 consecutive attempts
- Time based: for 15 minutes at a time

EVALUATION PROCEDURE
EXAMPLES:
- Homework assignment
- In class work
- Student assignment
- Documented observation
- Point sheets
- Office disciplinary referrals
- Attendance data
- Student’s daily work
- Rating scale
- Service provider logs
- Teacher logs
- Checklists
- Graphing data
EVALUATION SCHEDULE
- Daily
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Following summative assessment
- Every six weeks

REMEMBER THAT GOALS...
- must relate directly to the needs from the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP).
- must identify a learning gain that is both challenging and reasonably achievable in one year, given the instruction and services he/she will receive.
- must contain data sources that are consistent and align with those stated in the PLAAFP.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL EXAMPLE
- PLAAFP Excerpt: Based on Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) and direct observational logs, the student becomes physically aggressive (pushing, hitting, and spitting) toward peers in settings that require transitions under reduced supervision. The student is currently able to transition without physical aggression 60% of the time.
- Annual Goal: By March 2014, the student will demonstrate skills to transition without physical aggression under reduced supervision in multiple school settings during 80% of transitions as measured by observational logs and ODR’s.
DEVELOPING OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS

The MDE guidance includes the following required elements:
1. Performance criteria – at what level and under what conditions will objective be achieved
2. Evaluation procedure – what method used to document performance
3. Evaluation schedule – the frequency of the evaluation procedure

Objectives/benchmarks are intermediate steps designed to achieve the annual goal.

BENCHMARKS vs. SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES
- One overarching target for the year
- Different short-term objectives (skills) to achieve the goal
- Skill based

BENCHMARKS
- Target tracking to successful completion of annual goal
- Benchmarks are the goals, but with progressive growth each marking period
- Concept based
- Professional flexibility
- Better alignment to standards

OBJECTIVES

PLAAFP EXCERPT: BASED ON OFFICE DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS (ODR) AND DIRECT OBSERVATIONAL LOGS, THE STUDENT BECOMES PHYSICALLY AGGRESSIVE (PUSHING, HITTING, AND SPITTING) TOWARD PEERS IN SETTINGS THAT REQUIRE TRANSITIONS UNDER REDUCED SUPERVISION. THE STUDENT IS CURRENTLY ABLE TO TRANSITION WITHOUT PHYSICAL AGGRESSION 60% OF THE TIME.

ANNUAL GOAL: BY MARCH 2014, THE STUDENT WILL DEMONSTRATE SKILLS TO TRANSITION WITHOUT PHYSICAL AGGRESSION UNDER REDUCED SUPERVISION IN MULTIPLE SCHOOL SETTINGS DURING 80% OF TRANSITIONS AS MEASURED MONTHLY BY OBSERVATIONAL LOGS AND ODR.

- STO 1:
The student will demonstrate skills to transition without physical aggression while going to and from the cafeteria 80% of the time as measured monthly by observational logs and ODRs.

- STO 2:
The student will demonstrate skills to transition without physical aggression while exiting and entering the building 80% of the time as measured monthly by observational logs and ODRs.
THE USE OF BENCHMARKS

1. Benchmarks allow for the changing of interventions used without revising the IEP.

2. The focus is always on the goal.

3. Benchmarks create an aim line to monitor student growth.

BENCHMARKS

PLAAFP Excerpt: Based on Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs) and direct observational logs, the student becomes physically aggressive (pushing, hitting, and spitting) toward peers in settings that require transitions under reduced supervision. The student is currently able to transition without physical aggression 60% of the time.

Annual Goal: By March 2014, the student will demonstrate skills to transition without physical aggression under reduced supervision in multiple school settings during 80% of transitions as measured monthly by observational logs and ODRs.

- Benchmark 1: The student will demonstrate skills to transition without physical aggression under reduced supervision in multiple school settings 65% of the time as measured monthly by observational logs and ODRs.

- Benchmark 2: The student will demonstrate skills to transition without physical aggression under reduced supervision in multiple school settings 70% of the time as measured monthly by observational logs and ODRs.

Note: Benchmark 3 & 4 were not included in example.
PROGRESS REPORT
- Status areas should be completed at the time of the district's periodic reports with a clear narrative description of the student's progress
- Best practice: Use collected data when reporting progress
- Must include:
  - the date of the periodic report
  - the progress toward the annual goal as defined by the short-term objective/benchmark
  - (Note: Comments are required if progress is limited or if the objective is not applicable at time of reporting.)

NATURE OF EFFECTIVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS
- Ensure students have access to and make progress in the general curriculum.
- Set a challenging, yet realistic annual goal.
- Implement interventions that prove successful by data collection.
- Monitor as often as is needed to be well informed of student's progress.

Practice Makes Perfect
You are now ready to construct measurable annual goals and short-term objectives/benchmarks!

For the remainder of our time:
- We’ll provide worked examples.
- You’ll practice writing your own goals.